

REMARKS

Careful consideration has been given to the Official Action of April 5, 2006.

Reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

Priority

It is noted that the Examiner has not considered the Japanese patents which have been cited on the IDS filed April 12, 2004 but has considered the patent Abstracts of these references.

Claim Status

Claims 5-6 have been rejected under 35 USC 112, section .

Claims 1-5 have been rejected under 35 USC 102 as being anticipated by Sakai.

Claim 6 has been rejected under 35 USC 103 as being unpatentable over Sakai in view of Kitai.

Claim Action and Argument

Claims 1-3 have been cancelled and replaced by claim 7.

Claim 4 has been amended to depend from claim 7.

Claim 8 has been added and is dependent from claim 7.

Claim 5 has been rewritten in independent form and thereby overcomes the rejection raised by the Examiner under 37 USC 112.

Claim 6 has been amended and is dependent from claim 5.

As now presented the claims for consideration are claims 4-6 and 7-8.

Claim 7 includes substantially all of the limitations of claims 1 to 3 and further limitations concerning the specific shape of the sides of the slot defining the axial thrust compensating device. In particular, it is now claimed that the second side has a sloping profile extending from the base side

to the axial end portion, and that the first side has an inclined portion adjacent to the base portion with a slope opposite said second side and converging with respect to said second side towards said end portion of said slot, and an intermediate knee portion between the inclined portion and the axial end portion.

The amendment is supported in the specification on page 5, last paragraph.

The claimed asymmetric profiles of the two sides of the slot provide for a different behavior of the torque thrust compensating device depending on the torque direction. In particular, the first side (referenced 26 in the drawings) has an inclined portion generating an axial thrust at low speed, and a knee intermediate portion between the inclined portion and the axial end portion of the slot; therefore, the axial thrust gradually decreases as the cam follower rolls over the intermediate knee portion and is zeroed out at high speeds when the torque is low and axial thrust provided by the spring (14) is sufficient to avoid belt slippage (see page 8 of the specification, last paragraph).

Conversely, in response to a braking torque the cam follower contacts the second side (25) that has a more uniform sloping profile, with no intermediate knee, and thus produces an axial thrust throughout the speed range. This has a beneficial effect on the behavior of the transmission in engine brake conditions.

Sakai does not disclose, nor suggest, the claimed features. Sakai discloses a slot having symmetrical sides, i.e. either a Y shape (see figs. 2, 3 and 6) with an intermediate knee in both sides or a V shape (see fig. 9) with linear sides. Therefore, the response of the axial thrust compensating device is identical both in driving and in braking condition, the axial thrust generated by the device depending only on the speed and torque transmitted but not on the torque direction.

Sakai clearly teaches symmetrical sides of the slot. Nothing in the prior art suggest modifying the Sakai reference in order to obtain a different behavior in driving and braking condition. Therefore, claim 7 is not met nor obvious in view of the cited prior art.

Claim 5 has been rewritten in independent form, including all the limitations of new claim 7 in order to overcome the Examiner's objection under 35 USC, section 112.

For the above reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the claims now present in the application are clearly allowable over the cited art and favorable reconsideration is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Julian H. Cohen', written over a horizontal line.

Julian H. Cohen

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